

REMARKS

In paragraph 5 of the Action, claims 1-8, 10, 11 and 13-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Noguchi in view of Kawashima. In paragraph 6 of the Action, claims 9 and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Noguchi.

In view of the rejections, claim 1 has been amended, and claims 4 and 8 have been amended to dependent form from claim 1. Claims 3, 13, 15 and 16 have been cancelled, and claims 2 and 14 have been slightly amended. Further, new claims 17-22 have been added.

In paragraph 5 of the Action, it was held that "Noguchi teaches the claimed invention except for a width restraining device. Kawashima discloses a safety gas bag structure comprising width restraining device, see figure 5."

However, although Noguchi discloses the left and right half airbags 1a, 1b, the left and right half airbags are connected at a portion 1c from the rear portions to the middle portions of the half airbags. Also, the left and right half airbags do not have a base integrally connected together. Thus, in addition to the width restraining device, the detailed structures of the left and right half airbags of the invention are different from those of Noguchi.

As stated in the Action, Fig. 1 of Noguchi discloses the left and right half airbags connected together at the constraining means 1c. No width restraining device is formed inside the respective left and right half airbags.

In Fig. 5 of Kawashima referred to in the Action, each of cloth pieces 40 is connected between adjacent panels, so that when the gas bag is inflated, the gas bag forms a cubic or rectangular shape.

In claim 1 now amended, it is defined that "said width constraining device comprises a first constraining device disposed inside the left half airbag, and a second constraining device disposed inside the right half airbag, said first and second width constraining devices being arranged to extend substantially horizontally along one line perpendicularly to a direction that the left and right half airbags extend to the occupant."

Namely, the first and second width constraining devices formed in the left and right half airbags are arranged to extend substantially horizontally along one line perpendicularly to a direction that the left and right half airbags extend to the occupant.

In Fig. 5 of Kawashima, the two cloth pieces 40 are installed inside the gas bag to form the rectangular shape. Therefore, if Kawashima and Noguchi are referred to, the two cloth pieces 40 of

Kawashima may be installed inside each of the left and right half airbags of Noguchi. However, such an arrangement does not constitute the arrangement of claim 1, i.e. the first and second width constraining devices are arranged to extend substantially horizontally along one line perpendicularly to a direction that the left and right half airbags extend to the occupant.

In Kawashima, one gas bag is formed in the rectangular shape by one or two restraining members when it is inflated. Therefore, the arrangements of the two half airbags are not considered at all. Even if Noguchi and Kawashima are referred to, claim 1 of the invention is not obvious from these references.

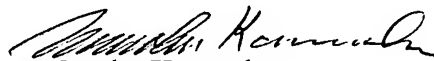
In regard to the rejections for claims 9 and 12 by Noguchi, the basic structure from which claims 9 and 12 depend, i.e. claim 1, is not obvious from Noguchi in view of Kawashima, as explained above. Therefore, claims 9 and 12 are patentable as well.

As explained above, claims now pending in the application are patentable over Noguchi in view of Kawashima.

Reconsideration and allowance are earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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